524 [525] The top principle is also employed in a game of skill played by men and older boys, often with wagers. The tops used in this game are made from large, flat seeds about 1½ inches in diameter and ⅝ to ¾ inch thick. A round hole about ⅝ inch in diameter is cut in one side of the seed and the kernel removed. A bone point is then attached to the lower side with beeswax (Fig. 27, g). The player spins the seed by inserting the tips of the index fingers of both hands in the opening in its top and giving it a quick twirl. The players stand and flip their tops at another seed of the same variety lying on the ground, or at a small hole or other mark. The player who strikes the mark with the bone point on his seed wins.

Stilts, known by a term which means literally "wooden feet," have been used since prehistoric times. They are made from saplings about 1½ inches in diameter and 5 feet long. About 18 inches from the bottom the stub of a small branch is left projecting as a foot rest. The upper ends of the stilts are grasped in the hands. Stilt walking seems to be a solitary sport, practiced mainly by young children.

Among minor toys may be mentioned slender forked sticks, used by boys to imitate cattle horns when they play at fighting bulls or bull baiting. A heavier stick, with a cow's hoof carved on the end, is also used to make artificial cattle tracks in games of cattle stealing or pursuing thieves (Fig. 26, e).

[117] Pop guns are also to be reckoned among the minor toys, although they are pretty certainly of European origin. They are made from sections of bamboo about 1½ inches in diameter and 2 feet long. A strip of bamboo is bent into U form and inserted in a slit in the top of the tube, to serve as a spring. This is drawn back and held by another strip of bamboo which is pivoted to the tube by a wooden pin (Fig. 28, c). These pop guns are used to shoot small stones or clay pellets.

An interesting toy consists of a short section of reed or small bamboo with the end split and spread into a cone. A pith ball is placed in the cone and the player balances it there by throwing back his head and blowing through the tube with exactly the right force (Fig. 27, a).

224 961 While I was in Ambohimanga the boys frequently brought me small models of traps which they had made. These were offered for sale and I doubt whether such models were used in their own play. They begin to make real traps for small birds and mammals at a 000 very early age. Tanala toys seem to be characterized by an almost

137 competition. Tanala children seem to be rather less active and are certainly less noisy than European children of the same ages. Small children and girls seem to sit about a good deal and vaguely play at quiet games. The boys are more active and organize themselves into gangs. The activities of these gangs are sometimes directed by old men, but this seems to be a matter of friendship rather than organized control. The gangs are not mischievous and I never heard of children stealing or destroying property deliberately. Fights are rare and are discouraged by the elders.

148 The boys hunt and fish, learn tracking, and also play at war. In the last they choose sides and carry on sham battles under the direction of old men who show them how to use their weapons and keep real fights from developing. In this way they learn how to throw the spear and get an elementary training in scouting and tactics.

146 Children receive no regular instruction and are rarely disciplined. They begin to help their parents at a very early age, although they do not seem to be set regular tasks. From the first they take part in the community life, attending all feasts and ceremonies. By the time they reach puberty they are able to do the work of adults and can assume their places as full members of the community.

PUBERTY

141 It is very difficult to obtain data on the exact age at which puberty occurs, but the Tanala seem to mature somewhat later than Europeans. The girls' first menses rarely occur before fifteen and sometimes not before seventeen years. Boys mature somewhat earlier. There is no suggestion of puberty rites or observances for either sex.

141 Menstruating women are not considered unclean and can take part in all activities, etc. *I could not discover* that they were subject to any taboos. Married women usually sleep on the floor, apart from their husbands, at such times, but it does not seem to be obligatory. During menstruation women insert a plug of bark cloth or leaves into the vagina, removing it from time to time and washing out the blood. There is no interruption in their regular duties.

CHILDREN'S HOUSE

142 When the eldest child is a lively reaches the age of fifteen or
139 sixteen, even if not physically mature, the father builds a separate house for it to the east of his dwelling. Girls use this as a work room